

REMARKS

This Amendment After Final is made in response to the final Office Action dated November 28, 2006. Claims 23-44 were currently pending. By this Amendment, claims 23, 31, 37 and 41 have been amended to include the recitations that the filtering portion/means includes a directional member which forms a truncated conical shape when expanded. In view of the amendments to claims 23 and 31, dependent claims 30 and 36 have been canceled without prejudice. Favorable reconsideration of the pending claims is requested.

Claims 23-44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,336,934 to Gilson et al. (the “Gilson patent”). Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's position regarding the disclosure of the Gilson patent. However, in order to expedite allowance of this application, Applicant has amended independent claims 23, 31, 37 and 41 to include the recitations that the filtering portion/means includes a directional member which forms a truncated conical shape when expanded. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the previously pending and similar claims in a related application to be filed at a later date.

Applicant notes that the embodiment in the Gilson patent relied upon by the Examiner, namely, the device shown in Figures 37 and 39 and described in the specification at column 14, lines 60-62, fails to show or disclose a filtering portion/means including a directional member which forms a truncated conical shape when expanded. Therefore, for at least this reason alone, the Gilson patent fails to disclose the particular structure recited in the pending claims.

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the Gilson patent as an anticipatory reference to the claims at issue.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully urged that all of the present claims of the application are patentable and in a condition for allowance. The undersigned attorney can be reached at (310) 824-5555 to facilitate prosecution of this application, if necessary.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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